

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 760

By Kyle

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Senator Charlotte Burks for her honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee as a member of the Senate.

WHEREAS, it is most appropriate that the members of this body should honor those fellow legislators who have performed their duties with the utmost integrity and whose efforts during their time in office have been dedicated to providing thoughtful and exemplary service to their districts and to this great State; and

WHEREAS, Senator Charlotte Burks of Monterey is one such distinguished public servant who served both her constituency and this legislative body with honor and ability; and

WHEREAS, Senator Burks is a highly influential figure in the political, social, and civic lives of the 15<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District, which includes Cumberland, Jackson, Overton, Bledsoe, Putnam, and White Counties; she has served her constituents in numerous capacities, always working diligently at her elected duties and expending the necessary effort to understand the opposing sides of complex issues; and

WHEREAS, Charlotte Burks distinguished herself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and as an exceptional asset to the good people of the 15<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District, who evinced their firm belief in her abilities as a legislator by electing her to serve four consecutive terms as their senator, a position in which she performed admirably; and

WHEREAS, Charlotte Burks's path to public office was quick, and her acclimation into the legislative arena was hastened by the tragic, untimely death of her husband, Senator Tommy Burks; when he died, he was just four weeks away from a predicted electoral victory which would have returned the long-serving incumbent to the Capitol; and

WHEREAS, in the midst of the tragedy, the voters of the district responded wholly to an organized write-in campaign and made the resounding choice to send Charlotte Burks to Nashville to continue her beloved husband's legacy; and

WHEREAS, Charlotte Burks arrived at the Capitol in 1999 to stand in her husband's stead, and over the ensuing sixteen years, she has grown and matured into a highly respected and impactful legislator. She has been re-elected three times, for a total of sixteen years of service in office; and

WHEREAS, a member of the 101<sup>st</sup> through the 108<sup>th</sup> General Assemblies, Charlotte Burks is respected by all as a dedicated and well-informed legislator who always votes her conscience; and

WHEREAS, as an active and dynamic participant in the legislative process, Senator Burks currently renders sterling service as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair of the Senate Ethics Committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair of the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee, and a member of the Senate Education Committee and the Senate Energy, Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee; and

WHEREAS, Senator Burks has consistently championed victims' rights during her tenure in the General Assembly; she serves on the Domestic Violence State Coordinating Council and served as Tennessee Victims of Crime State Coordinating Council Chairman, 2002-2003; and

WHEREAS, she is a tireless advocate for children's well-being and high-quality education; she served many years on the General Assembly's oversight committees on TennCare, corrections, and children and youth, and she is a strong advocate for a comprehensive, coordinated system of mental health care for children and adults; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Senator Burks has been recognized as a legislator of the year in multiple years by a host of various organizations, including domestic violence coalitions, mental health advocacy groups, 4-H and agriculture groups, education organizations, Tennessee Association of Human Resource Agencies, Upper Cumberland Development District, and County Officials Association of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Senator Burks is a woman of deep, abiding faith and a member of Sycamore Church of Christ in Cookeville; and

WHEREAS, as a lover of the land, farming gives Charlotte Burks great joy, and she is among the most influential agrarians in the history of Tennessee. She is content with the intrinsic beauty and satisfaction of the farming lifestyle and is perhaps happiest when she goes for drives “in the back” to check the cows; and

WHEREAS, Senator Burks is the matriarch of a large yet very close-knit family; her daughters and their spouses are Kim and Mike Blaylock, Kelly and Mike Tayes, and Kerry and Lee King; and

WHEREAS, her ten grandchildren are Charlotte Blaylock Looper, Amy Blaylock New, Whitney Tayes, Molly Plummer, Tommy Michael Tayes, Eli King, Levi Blaylock, Alley King, Caden King, and Kellen King; and her great-grandchildren are Trenton Maynard, Lily Kate New, Tucker Tayes, and Darcie Looper; and

WHEREAS, when Charlotte Burks became the occupant of the 15<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District seat, she did so not out of desire, but rather out of duty, and now, as she chooses to pass that torch of duty on to the people’s next choice for the seat, she will again travel east on the byway that bears her husband’s name to the locale of her beloved Big Acre Farm in Monterey, where she will immerse herself in quiet repose, returning to the land and lifestyle she loves so well; and

WHEREAS, Senator Burks has proven herself to be a thoughtful and dedicated leader, who feels she has been truly blessed by the honor of serving the 15<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District; she is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the “Volunteer State,” and she should be specially recognized for her exemplary tenure in this body; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor Senator Charlotte Burks for her meritorious service to Tennessee as a member of the Senate, commend her for her countless contributions and many

good works in service of the citizens of the 15<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District, and extend to her our best wishes for much continued success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.